

The Eclectic Theosophist

NO. 11

July 15, 1972

A BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Subscription for one year
(6 issues), \$2.50

P.O. Box 9966 — San Diego, California 92109

Editors: W. Emmett Small, Helen Todd

INTERPLANETARY THINKING

MONTAGUE A. MACHILL

This title (more figurative than literal), is less overwhelmingly learned than it sounds. It has not to do with constellations, nebulae or star-clusters, *per se*, but is related to a pattern of thought that unfolds beyond this physical, time-fettered earth on which we live, seeking constantly a Wholeness in which material particulars achieve an appropriate modesty.

Night after night I stand beneath these desert stars of unearthly brilliance, watching the glorious winter constellations unfold out of an eastern womb of darkness. The more I contemplate their splendor, the more a breathless awareness of some relationship between myself and the unbounded beauty of a limitless universe overwhelms me. I return to my studio wearing a nimbus of everlasting glory which this desert night has designed to bestow momentarily upon me. Yesterday, tomorrow, President Kennedy, Summit conferences, Congolese massacres, and the price of gasoline—all these things lose some of their immediacy. The hour borrows a heritage in Time and Place, that ever was and ever will be, revealing itself for the moment as truly epic. Something at the heart of Time and Place absorbs all physical and temporal details into itself. Beyond Phoenix, beyond the Pacific, beyond China and the last outpost of civilization on this earth—on to and beyond Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, this Heart of Life, this Oneness of The Supreme, links all—the greatest and the least—in a heavenly significance of the One Reality—call It what you will. It alone holds the ultimate meaning of all our earthly gobbledygook!

To wake in the morning with an undertone of thought and aspiration that lends TODAY the inherited significance of many, many incarnations, this HERE the inherited magnificence of Carthage, Athens, Troy and Denderah — makes of that awakening a 'magic casement' to Life! To discover the *non-existence* of the Commonplace, is the reward of nothing less than a radiant SELF-knowledge—a reverent awareness, and utter dedication to the Deathless SELF, that murmurs in Its musings:

"I am Memnon!

I am He that calleth upon the dawn!"

Or again:

"O my Divinity! Thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for Thyself temples of mighty power!"—an invocation to THAT, which, above Form, beyond Time and Place, lends to the Illusion of life's raw material the radiance of Spiritual Reality, and is, beyond all else, an Invocation to Interplanetary Thinking!

To achieve it, I must penetrate the depths of my heart, beyond Sound unto Silence, beyond Things unto Essence, beyond Personality unto Spiritual Selfhood. This I hold to be the *primary* meaning of the term 'living'. It means

marshalling all outward sounds, signs and phenomena at the behests of an Ultimate Significance—the bidding of THE ONE—the 'Father', if you will, in a complete awareness that

"I and MY FATHER are one!"

—Reprinted from *Theosophia*, Spring 1962

MAKING OUR RELIGION REAL

Religion is a way of life rather than a set of dogmas. Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians, says: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (iii, 6). The Buddha is reported to have held his peace when a disciple asked him for a definite answer about the immortality of the soul: he knew that his words would resound over the earth and down the ages, and was loth to start a dogma; for whatever he might have said would be turned into a dogma. It was a way of life that he was teaching: live the life and you shall know the doctrine; knowledge comes by experience. Great truths may be such as cannot be formulated in words: no verbal answer would be right. But they may be realized through conduct. Was it not Carlyle who said that the end of man was a deed, not a thought alone?

Religion begins with an outpouring of the spirit—by someone endowed with a plentitude thereof, and who is therefore a Teacher. Later on it crystallizes into dogmas. Here we see the contrast between spirit and form, or life and form. Both are necessary: it is by their interaction that a plant grows. All growth seems to imply a life-cycle which begins with an exuberance of life and but little form, and ends with a hidebound form and a minimum of life. Compare the sapling with the aged tree; contrast the babe with the old man; witness any religion, starting with a Man, full of life and the spirit, with a dozen disciples; and ending with a mass of doctrines and documents religiously preserved by dispirited and disillusioned generations. . . .

We need to go back to the idea that religion is not an exotic, a sort of drawing-room in the house of life, kept covered up and used only on state occasions; but that it is the essence of life itself. This does not mean dragging down religion to the level of vulgarity, but the raising of the tone of our life to the level of religion. A man's religion should color his every act. As a matter of fact, it does; but in the sense that we have two religions—one for everyday and one for Sundays . . .

We must try to bring our religion down out of the clouds into our daily life; not by lowering the religion but by raising the life. Thus we shall move away from that duplicity or insincerity or hypocrisy which consists in living in two different atmospheres, one religious and the other not. Our life will become sincere and whole and our religion real.

—Henry T. Edge in *The Theosophical Path*, (Point Loma)

ABOUT MADAME BLAVATSKY FACTS vs FALSEHOODS, FICTIONS, AND BIASSED SURMISES

AN OPEN LETTER TO DANIEL COHEN, AUTHOR OF
"MASTERS OF THE OCCULT".(*)

Sir: Your forty-three-page novelette about Madame Blavatsky, Chapter VIII in your book on *Masters of the Occult*, is the *ne plus ultra* of *ex parte* pleading. You have constituted yourself prosecutor, chief prosecution witness, and partisan judge, determined *a priori* to find the accused guilty without due process of law, and without permitting her to testify in her own behalf. The few times you permit her a few words of her own you introduce them with the prosecutor's critical remarks or with following comments casting doubt on her testimony, with no opportunity for the reader to judge it on its own merits.

You have used all the privileges and tricks of the fiction-writer in attributing motives, assuming purposes, substituting your own beliefs for proven facts and repeatedly violating all the rules established by centuries of experience in civilized judicial proceedings as to what constitutes valid evidence.

Your own motives, beyond writing a sensational story well calculated to sell your wares regardless of truth or whom you may hurt, are doubtless known only to you. I shall not follow your egregious example by ascribing motives which may be convincing to me but which are not admissible in an unbiassed public forum. On almost every one of your pages, you show yourself determined that the reader shall accept your interpretation of events and statements, while invariably cautioning him, directly or indirectly, not to be 'taken in' by statements made by H.P.B. or her friends; regardless of who these may be.

But, Mr. Cohen, you have proven yourself unreliable, or at least incompetent if not downright dishonest, in the very first paragraph of your fiction parading as fact. You write: "No one who was ever closely associated with her [H.P.B.] can truthfully be said to have come out the better for it . . ." A little more careful or open-minded or candid research would have revealed to you the utter falsity of such a sweeping charge. Below is a list of people of education and honorable character, who have publicly given the lie direct to your ungenerous and false allegation. Their published statements can be found quoted *verbatim* on pages 116 to 141 of my book *Mme. Blavatsky Defended*: Henry T. Edge, [M.A. Cantab.], Herbert Coryn, [M.D., M.R.C.S.], Reginald Willoughby Machell, [Artist, Member of the Royal Academy, London], Fred J. Dick, [M. Inst., C.E.], Elizabeth Churchill Spalding [Mrs. A. G. Spalding], H. T. Patterson, Clark Thurston, William A. Dunn. I was closely associated with these individuals for years, and all of them knew H.P.B. personally, some of them intimately. The following persons who were intimately associated with H.P.B. were unknown to me personally, but their testimony of gratitude to, and appreciation of, her is also published *in extenso* in my book: William Q. Judge, G. R. S. Mead, Emily Kislingbury, Saladin [in *Agnostic Journal*], Arch.

Keightley, M.D., Franz Hartman, M.D., Alice Gordon, William Kingsland, Babula, José Xifre, Countess Wachtmeister. I cite just one as an example, written by José Xifre from Spain:

"I have lost my Friend and Teacher, who purified my life, who gave me back my faith in Humanity, and in her admirable example of courage, self-sacrifice, and disinterestedness, and virtue, I shall find the strength and courage necessary for working for that cause which we are all bound to defend. May her memory be blessed! . . .

"Let enemies and materialists explain, if they can, the power and attraction of H. P. Blavatsky, and if they cannot, let them be silent. The tree will be known by its fruits, as actions will be judged and valued by their results."

You, Mr. Cohen, devote practically the whole of your chapter to supporting your *parti pris* that H.P.B. was "a cynical and thoroughly dishonest woman." The hostile statements of personal enemies are consistently used as grist for your mill. Even when on rare occasions some reputable person is permitted to speak favorably of her, you interject some uncalled-for, snide comment of your own to detract from the credibility of the favorable testimony. This may appeal to you as a shrewd way to pillory your victim and to deceive the casual and non-analytical reader, but how trustworthy a chronicler does it make of you?

To illustrate: On page 170 you correctly report: ". . . before H.P.B. would accept Mrs. Besant she asked her to read Hodgson's damaging report on theosophy." Why not just for once leave it at that and give H.P.B. the credit of dealing frankly with an honest and highly intelligent woman of distinction? No, that would be a devastating blow to your whole thesis; so you parry this with venomous innuendo and a bald statement of your own biased conclusion as though this was an indisputable, established fact: "*H.P.B. knew her subject well.* [italics mine]. Later Mrs. Besant wrote: 'Was the writer of the *Secret Doctrine* this miserable imposter, this accomplice of tricksters, this foul and loathsome deceiver, this conjurer with trap-doors and sliding panels.' *Sure she was,* [italics mine], but Annie Besant would never believe that, 'I laughed aloud at the absurdity and flung the Report aside with the righteous scorn of an honest nature that knew its own kind when it met them and shrank from the foulness and baseness of a lie.'"

Much of your chapter on H.P.B. involves the complete acceptance of the Hodgson Report. You completely ignore the vindication of her in Adlai E. Waterman's *Obituary, The "Hodgson Report" on Madame Blavatsky*, Victor A. Endersby's *The Hall of Magic Mirrors*, and Walter A. Carithers Jr.'s *The Truth About Madame Blavatsky*. And do you even call attention to the fact that H.P.B. was not permitted to testify in her own defense and that her detractors were not cross-examined? The Hodgson Report was a purely *ex parte* pleading.

However, my present open letter in rebuttal to your derogation of H.P.B. is not dependent upon either the soundness or the unreliability of the Hodgson Report. In the first place, I could never qualify as a competent witness as regards the genuineness of the phenomena alleged to have been performed by H.P.B. I was not a witness to any of

(*)Dodd, Mead and Co., 1971.

them and neither were you, Mr. Cohen. My testimony, like yours, would be pure hearsay.

I state with confidence that the basis on which H.P.B.'s reputation permanently stands or falls is her own voluminous writings. These are available and incontrovertible. By these she should and will be judged by posterity. As to the genuineness of the phenomena which she is alleged to have produced through the use of supernormal but not supernatural powers with which she was apparently endowed, there is not likely ever to be unanimous agreement among those interested in such things. The present writer is agnostic—in the literal sense of the word. I don't know. All that I would be qualified to testify to is that I myself have no such powers. However, I am reminded that Tennyson endowed Merlin with them, Shakespeare attributed them to Prospero, and the Christian Bible vouches for Jesus having possessed them. Who am I and who are you to challenge what more evolved beings can do in controlling the unseen powers in Nature? Whether the so-called 'miracles' of Christ were actual rather than symbolic, is something which the modern physical scientists may or may not agree upon. However, it is traditional and respectable in Christian countries to accept them on faith if not with knowledge. Who are you and I to judge?

On the other hand, what every intelligent, aspiring person can accept and prove for himself is the value in his personal life of the Sermon on the Mount. Similarly, what every sincere person can test for himself and prove convincingly to his own individual satisfaction, is the validity and the inspiration of the sublime teachings contained in H. P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*. From this I quote a few passages in rebuttal to your charge that she was "a cynical and thoroughly dishonest woman":

"Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

"Let not the fierce Sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye."

"To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practice the six glorious virtues is the second."

"So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother."

"The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe, drive him from out his stronghold, vanquish him, ere he himself expires. Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul, chase all your foes away—ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire—when even you have failed."

"Compassion speaks and saith: 'Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?'"

It here seems incumbent upon me to leave H.P.B.'s sublime ethics to speak for themselves, while I deal with particulars regarding the general rebuttal implied in the title of this letter.

On Page 133, Mr. Cohen, you indulge in assumptions which are unwarranted by any evidence submitted: "Helena wandered the world, having, *one must assume*, all manner of exciting and *scandalous* adventures." [Italics mine.] Why *must* one so assume that H.P.B.'s adventures were *scandal-*

ous? And what facts do you submit to support the statement lower on the same page: ". . . few [occultists] had quite so much to cover as she . . ."

On Page 135 you write: "Witte was astounded that so many *intelligent people* could be *taken in* by what *seemed* to him obvious sleight-of-hand tricks." [Italics mine] If they were 'intelligent people', were they necessarily 'taken in' by what 'seemed' to him slight-of-hand-tricks? On the same page I have italicized assumptions presented by you as facts: "When H.P.B. *tried to pose* as an ascetic she went to great and *largely* unsuccessful lengths to prove that she was a virgin." *Largely* but not wholly unsuccessful!

How about the following paragraph beginning on Page 139 for a bit of lurid fiction, readily to be accepted as fact by the uncritical reader?:

"But it was not to see the spirits or to produce them that had tempted H.P.B. to travel to the Eddy farm. In the hard months which had preceded her visit to Vermont she had furiously schemed and plotted ways by which she could be propelled to the lucrative forefront of the American spiritualist world. Time was running out and H.P.B. knew it. She had spent a quarter of a century roaming the world, and now past forty she was still penniless and still obscure. If she was to 'make it' in the world she had to do it soon."

On Page 140 you quote Olcott, who was an eye-witness writing what he saw:

"A stout and remarkable looking woman wearing a perky hat with plumes, a grand toilette satin dress with much trimming, a long heavy gold chain about her neck attached to a blue enamelled watch with a monogram in cheap diamonds, and on her lovely hands a dozen or fifteen rings, large and small . . . I have gone to the theatre with her when I expected the house to rise to us."

But now note the slanted, biassed introduction you give to the above quoted passage:

"Her [H.P.B.'s] size and extreme sloppiness would have made her stand out in any crowd, and when she was arrayed in fancy dress in order to make an impression her appearance was grotesquely fantastic. Olcott tried to be as kind as possible in this description."

On Page 143 you write:

"While the Tuitit Bey letter was doubtless just a momentary inspiration, it served Madame's purpose admirably."

How do you know this, Mr. Cohen? You were not there, and your own biassed conclusions are not valid evidence.

On Page 144, you write:

"H.P.B.'s great invention, theosophy, was born, at least in name, in that eventful year of 1875."

Well, in *The Key to Theosophy*, Mme. Blavatsky herself writes:

"The name Theosophy dates from the third century of our era, and began with Ammonius Saccas and his disciples, who started the Eclectic Theosophical system"

On the same page, you say: "H.P.B. could never tolerate independence." But H.P.B. herself wrote: "The duty of a Theosophist: to fear no one and naught save the tribunal of his own conscience."

On Page 146 you write:

"The New York Times refused to review the book [*Isis Unveiled*] because the editors feared a flow of violently abusive letters from H.P.B. if the review was a bad one."

Where did you pick up that bit of gossip, Mr. Cohen, ninety-six years after the book was published? And why did you not also quote *The New York Herald's* critique?: "With its striking peculiarities, its audacity, its versatility, and the prodigious variety of subjects which it notices and handles, *Isis Unveiled* is one of the remarkable productions of the century."

You continue: "But the occult-minded public loved *Isis Unveiled*. The first edition of this virtually unreadable book sold out in ten days. It is still selling today." Strange paradox: "Virtually unreadable" and "still selling today", nearly a hundred years after its publication! Yes, including the very latest, definitive edition as part of *The Collected writings of H. P. Blavatsky*, compiled and edited by her surviving relative, Boris de Zirkoff, and issued this year, 1972, by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, 60187, Price \$20.00!

On Page 146, you also state:

"While *Isis Unveiled* was being written, H.P.B. and Olcott finally began to live together openly The couple moved into an apartment on Forty-seventh Street and Eighth Avenue."

Why did you not state that she occupied a lower apartment, and he an upper, and moreover that his sister and her family lived in another? Of course, such simple facts would have erased a rather cheap bit of gossip with its implications.

On Page 149 you write:

"So as soon as she was eligible, H.P.B. became an American citizen. If there was one thing in the world that Madame loved—aside from herself—it was Russia. Thus, she found the whole business of becoming an American citizen thoroughly distasteful, but she did it and immediately prepared to leave."

Here is what H.P.B. wrote to the *Bombay Gazette* on May 12, 1879:

"Permit me further to state—if only for the edification of the *Times of India* and a brood of snarling little papers, searching around after the garbage of journalism—that I have never styled myself aught but what I can prove myself to be—namely, an honest woman, now a citizen of America, my adopted country, and the only land of true freedom in the whole world."

I quote the following from your Page 156:

"Inherent in H.P.B.'s rather disorderly scheme of the universe was the concept of reincarnation, so no one ever really need fear death."

The thoughtful reader will not be satisfied with this fleeting reference to reincarnation. But compared with the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of Daniel Cohen, who are Plato, Pythagoras, Albert Schweitzer, Thoreau, Thomas Huxley, Schopenhauer, Benjamin Franklin, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and the Sages of India, Tibet, Egypt and Greece? In passing, we suggest that all readers interested in the subject consult the recent scholarly and well-researched volumes compiled and edited by Joseph Head and S. L.

Cranston, titled *Reincarnation—An East-West Anthology, and Reincarnation in World Thought*, published by The Julian Press, New York, in 1961 and 1967 respectively.

On page 156 you do admit:

"The Mahatma letters also occasionally contained genuinely noble sentiments. Take this quote from the most mysterious and august Mahatma of them all, Maha Chohan himself. (from *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, ed. by C. Jinarâjadâsa, 1923):

"The Theosophical Society was chosen as the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity. To achieve the proposed object a more benevolent intermingling of the high and the low, of the Alpha and Omega of Society, was determined upon. The whole race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations, to call the poor despised 'nigger' brother. The prospect may not smile to all, but he is no Theosophist who objects to this principle."

The earnest student will not be satisfied with one 'noble sentiment', a single 'condescending suggestion' quoted from the Mahâ Chohan but will enrich his life by reading the whole of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, especially Section III, Probation and Chelaship, covering 173 pages of inspiring teachings

On Page 164 of your chapter on H.P.B. occurs the following bit of sensational fiction, stated as though it were established fact:

"Safe from the storms of Adyar, but also without power, she began to recover and to scheme. Her mind probed wildly in all directions . . ."

The facts: Chronically ill, at times critically so, she spent long hours by day and by night writing her monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*—begun at Würzburg, continued at Ostend, and completed in London, where it was published in 1888—a work well calculated "to arrest the attention of the highest minds"—including, I am told, men like Thomas Edison, Robert Millikan and Albert Einstein.

Those who have read the excellent volume compiled by Sven Eek on *Dâmodar* and the *Pioneers of the Theosophical Movement* will not be 'taken in' by Mr. Cohen's unsupported hypothesis: "Simple suicide is a more probable explanation for his [Dâmodar's] disappearance."

Having accepted without challenge every derogatory statement about H.P.B. cited throughout your chapter, Mr. Cohen, you reveal the conclusive proof of your persistent hostility, not to say viciousness, when you come to the attacks on her by Dr. Elliott Coues. I underscore the final evidence of your bias, unfitting you to be accepted as a trustworthy biographer:

"... one of his attacks, printed in the New York *Sun* was so intemperate that he even accused Madame of doing some things that she had not done (*an admittedly difficult task*). Madame demanded an apology, and finally after she was dead the *Sun* printed one. It was the closest thing to a public vindication that H.P.B. ever received."

To challenge every falsehood, erroneous or biased charge, surmise or unverified rumor in your chapter on H. P. Blavatsky, would require an analysis of Theosophical history and consideration of minutiae far beyond the scope of an

open letter. The reader will judge as to whether or not I have demonstrated how utterly untrustworthy is your account, and how vitiated it is from beginning to end with unmitigated bias and unverified assumptions.

IVERSON L. HARRIS

Pacific Beach, California, May 15, 1972.

IS FOETICIDE A CRIME?

The Editors have received an eloquent plea condemning the "monstrous practice of abortion" from Mrs. Eloise Wilson, LLB, Vice-President, Atma Vidya Lodge of the T.S., of Victoria, B.C., Canada. In it she refers to H. P. Blavatsky's article in *The Theosophist* of August 1883 (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, V, 106). As this covers the same basic points and unequivocally states the Theosophical position we quote it in full. The article is introduced by a letter from a Theosophist and medical doctor as follows.

The articles in your paper headed "Is Suicide a Crime?" have suggested to my mind to ask another question, "Is Foeticide a Crime?" Not that I personally have any serious doubts about the unlawfulness of such an act; but the custom prevails to such an extent in the United States that there are comparatively only few persons who can see any wrong in it. Medicines for this purpose are openly advertised and sold; in 'respectable families' the ceremony is regularly performed every year, and the family physician who should presume to refuse to undertake the job, would be peremptorily dismissed, to be replaced by a more accommodating one.

I have conversed with physicians, who have no more conscientious scruples to produce an abortion, than to administer a physic; on the other hand there are certain tracts from orthodox channels published against this practice; but they are mostly so overdrawn in describing the 'fearful consequences', as to lose their power over the ordinary reader by virtue of their absurdity.

It must be confessed that there are certain circumstances under which it might appear that it would be the best thing as well for the child that is to be born as for the community at large, that its coming should be prevented. For instance, in a case where the mother earnestly desires the destruction of the child, her desire will probably influence the formation of the character of the child and render him in his days of maturity a murderer, a jail-bird, or a being for whom it would have been better "if he never had been born."

But if foeticide is justifiable, would it then not be still better to kill the child after it is born, as then there would be no danger to the mother; and if it is justifiable to kill children before or after they are born then the next question arises: "At what age and under what circumstances is murder justifiable?"

As the above is a question of vast importance for thousands of people, I should be thankful to see it treated from the theosophical standpoint.

An "M.D., F.T.S.

George Town,
Colorado, U.S.A.

Editor's Note.—Theosophy in general answers: "At no age as under no circumstance whatever is a murder justifiable!" and occult Theosophy adds:—"yet it is neither from the standpoint of law, nor from any argument drawn from one or another orthodox *ism* that the warning voice is sent forth against the immoral and dangerous practice, but rather because in occult philosophy both physiology and psychology show its disastrous consequence." In the present case, the argument does not deal with the causes but with the effects produced. Our philosophy goes so far as to say that, if the Penal Code of most countries punishes attempts at suicide, it ought, if at all consistent with itself, to doubly punish foeticide as an attempt to *double suicide*. For, indeed, when even successful and the mother does not die just then, *it still shortens her life on earth to prolong it with dreary percentage in Kamaloka*, the intermediate sphere between the earth and the region of rest, a place which is no "St. Patrick's purgatory," but a fact, and a necessary halting place in the evolution of the degree of life. The crime

committed lies precisely in the willful and sinful destruction of life, and interference with the operations of nature, hence—with KARMA—that of the mother and the would-be future human being. The sin is not regarded by the occultists as one of a *religious* character—for, indeed, there is no more of spirit and soul, for the matter of that, in a foetus or even in a child before it arrives at self-consciousness, than there is in any other small animal,—for we deny the absence of soul in either mineral, plant or beast, and believe but in the difference of degree. But foeticide is a crime against nature. Of course the skeptic of whatever class will sneer at our notions and call them absurd superstitions and 'unscientific twaddle'. But we do not write for skeptics. We have been asked to give the views of Theosophy (or rather of occult philosophy) upon the subject, and we answer the query as far as we know.

OCCULT ASPECTS OF POLITICAL MANIPULATION THROUGH HYPNOSIS

By VICTOR ENDERSBY

An Open Letter was sent on January 24, 1972, by the Editor of *Theosophical Notes* and author of *The Hall of Magic Mirrors* (a unique evaluation of the career of H. P. Blavatsky) to The Sound Off Editor, *Saga*, Brooklyn, New York. We quote pertinent extracts.—Eds:

Dear Sir:

Noting your article "The Occult Aspects of Political Assassination" in February 1972 issue: I believe I have a little to contribute as a student of the so-called "occult" ever since 1912.

Mr. Norton is quite right about the myth pushed among hypnotists to the effect that one cannot be hypnotized into a deed against his moral scruples, because as he says, the subject can be deceived into thinking that it is a righteous deed. (For instance being convinced that a man is a tiger about to spring on a child present, and given a gun.) As any intelligent man knows, such trickery could be especially suited to political purposes, in which field we see perfectly respectable and intelligent men convinced that black is white, every day.

In addition, the comparison between convictions and hypnotic pressure brought by a trusted operator (he *must* be trusted) is all relative. Convictions vary in depth and strength and so do such pressures. Extensive research has been carried out, mainly in Germany and by established criminological scientists, which exposes this fallacy. It has also long been established, in Norway, for instance, that in a case of hypnotic murder, the operator is the one guilty under law, and to my knowledge, at least one man has been hanged for the offense. (The Europeans are far more advanced than we are in this field.) It is a terrifying weapon because of the near impossibility of securing a conviction; the post-hypnotic block which submerges the subject's memory of the deed, is just as strong as the suggestion itself.

Moreover, because of the difficulty and expense of carrying it out in most private cases, politics is the most logical field for it. (Ironically, Madame Blavatsky, who is mentioned rather invidiously in the article, was the first writer I know of to warn against the possibilities of criminal hypnosis; she was dead against the use of hypnosis under *any* circumstances, and her closest associate, a lawyer named

William Q. Judge, held that it should be tightly regulated by law. A good idea in principle, but I don't know exactly how it could be done effectively.)

Mr. Norton, incidentally, could speak more authoritatively on Mme. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, if he knew that it was not published "in the '90's," but in 1888. Too many people comment on that book unfavorably, who show in their comments that they have never cracked it open, or any other Theosophical book. As to its being a "Bible" to huge numbers of "occultists" all over the world, altogether about 40,000 of her followers exist, who are almost rigidly conditioned against hypnosis, and are *anti-occultists*, in the sense that they *oppose* attempts to develop abnormal personal powers in the present state of public morals, claiming that a general proficiency in such powers would wreck civilization, which it darned well would. "Occultists" of various other groups outnumber Theosophists at least ten to one if not a hundred to one, and almost all their leaders and publications carefully and consistently boycott Blavatsky publications; when they do use them they do so very selectively and with their own twists. It figures; millions if not billions of dollars are collared every year by the "occult" rackets; they have plenty of what it takes to keep a small un-influential group with publicly forgotten books smothered out in the ad sections.

As to the other main issue brought up in the article, the existence of malignant obsessing powers from the "other world"—the Blavatsky followers would agree to a certain extent, but would say that a lot of those obsessing powers are not dead men, but living men adept at malignant misuse of such powers as telepathy, including *hypnosis of suggestible people by it*. Quite a few students of the occult who know nothing about Blavatsky teachings have come to the same conclusion. That sort of thing is *why* those teachings oppose the development of such powers in the present state of civilization. They would probably make an exception of such uses as Hurkos' in the exposure of crime, but even in that category they involve some tough personal problems not easily understood by a non-student of the subject. The Blavatsky people do advocate *study* of these things from the point of view of fact, reality, and safety, but not for operative witchcraft or "black magic" as they call it. H. P. Blavatsky's books gave out no secret formulas for the personal development of "powers", one of the main reasons for the lack of interest in them by the mass of "occultists".

I suspect that before accepting the idea of "spirits", whether dead or demoniac, the public will want to go a lot farther into the question of what may be the real powers, malignant or benevolent, of the mysterious thing called the "subconscious", about which Mme. Blavatsky wrote extensively herself . . .

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

The Voice of the Silence

I wish to congratulate Kenneth Small for his article SPEAKING OUT—*The Voice of the Silence*, which appeared in the March 15th issue of your newsletter. Such a forthright statement is like a breath of fresh air. I was particularly interested in his remarks in regard to the edition published by the Chinese Buddhist Society in Peking in 1927, at the request of the Tashi Lama and edited by Mrs.

A. L. Cleather and Mr. Basil Crump. The reviewer brings out the extremely important point that as a result of this contact with the Tashi Lama by Mrs. Cleather and Mr. Crump, we have the highest outward representative of Mahāyāna Buddhism identifying the *Voice of the Silence* as "the only true exposition into English of the Heart Doctrine of the Mahāyāna." So much for countless detractors of H.P.B. and infamous alterations made by A. Besant *et alia* to the text.

I should like to inform you and your readers that the H.P.B. Library is the sole distributor of this Peking edition (as it is usually called) of *The Voice of the Silence*. Although the supply is limited copies can still be obtained from the above address for \$2.00, Canadian funds (postage free).

—The H.P.B. Library, c/o M. Freeman,
Springfield Rd., R.R.I., Vernon, B.C., Canada

The Hidden Voice

Elinor Roos, Sacramento, California.—It was a great pleasure to me to read your excellent article entitled "The Hidden Voice" which appeared in the May 15th issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist*. Holding sacred the memory of H.P.B. and all she did for us, I highly appreciate such articles as yours which bravely defend her from those who are forever misunderstanding and misjudging her. I thoroughly support your views and share your 'sickness of heart' and your apprehensions concerning Dr. Shearman's statements as quoted by you from his article entitled "Theosophical Ontologies." I sincerely hope that "The Hidden Voice" will reach many people and open their eyes to TRUTH.

Duwayne Ignacio, Aiea, Hawaii.—Your article entitled "The Hidden Voice" in the May 15, 1972 issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist*, brought to my mind the ever widening gulf between Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. I have complete sympathy with your views and consider Mr. H. Shearman's article only another attempt to raise the status of C. W. Leadbeater in the eyes of Theosophists by creating a smokescreen of untenable arguments which can only serve to belittle H.P.B.'s actual importance. There can be no logical compromise between the teachings of C.W.L. and of the Mahatmas. Mr. Shearman's attempt to cast doubts upon the obvious authoritativeness of the Mahatma Letters only shows how desperate he is. His idol cannot but be destroyed before the actual facts—either H.P.B. was a *direct and unimpeachable* agent of the Masters or she was not. And if she is not, then what foundation can the T.S. hope to claim? I do not understand how the leaders of the T.S. can on the one hand pay lip service to H.P.B. and on the other hand propagate without discrimination a whole body of literature which can only mislead the serious student.

Jan Molijn, Heemstede, Holland.—To me it is unbelievable that a Theosophist in such good standing [as Dr. Shearman] should be able to storm at H.P.B. like that, i.e. in such a sophisticated fashion, thereby blurring the insights of his readers. You have lined up with others in refuting shameful attacks on H.P.B. . . . At a recent televised program about Sufism and Theosophy Mrs. Nel Van de Schoot, National President of the Dutch Adyar T.S., spoke of H. P. Blavatsky's books *The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*. No mention was made of books by Bishop Leadbeater. This is certainly a promising sign, don't you think? May the deeper 'hidden voice' you refer to be heard more and more!

Maja Synge, Helsingborg, Sweden.—I'm eagerly waiting to see the effect of your 'Speaking Out' article, a stupendous task. I for one trust that it will 'disturb' a great many F.T.S. It is a strange and eminently fateful situation. Verily it is!

A 75th Anniversary in Holland

The Editors have received the following report from Jan Molijn of Heemstede, Holland.

In Amsterdam, 15th May, the Dutch Section T.S. (Adyar) celebrated its 75th anniversary. The speakers were Mrs. Van der Schoot, National President; and deputizing for Mr. Spienburg who was unable to attend, Prof. E. Krishnamacharya (philosophy, astrology, Vedic medicine, Telugu) of Waltair, South India, and Prof. Dr. J. H. Dubbink (metaphysics, Russian, history). Mrs. Van der Schoot referred to the foundation of the Dutch Section and to the Charter which was signed by Col. Olcott on 14th May 1897. The first president, Mrs. Meuleman, became a member in 1891. The Indian speaker's subject was 'humanology', the science of the human being as such. Man is to become truly MAN through evolution and reincarnation, the principal element being the awakening of the spark of love in our inner being, which makes for impersonality. Con-

centration of the mind is a waste of energy. We must give our hearts to the Master, and permit him to control our minds. In India 99.9% of the TS members there have never read *The Secret Doctrine* or *Isis Unveiled*. Yet Theosophists are in duty bound to know what these books contain, and apply this knowledge in their daily lives.

Prof. Dubbink pointed to what Plato had not written; his esotericism is still operational in that it influences the man who is sensitive enough. There must be a unity of life and knowledge. He then explained the background of the secret knowledge brought by H.P.B. He mentioned the Peking edition of *The Voice of the Silence*, which was recognized as esoteric Buddhism by the Tashi Lama; and he continued by enlarging upon the Tibetan works known by the names of Kanjur and Tanjur. He spoke of translations of important Tibetan sacred writings discussed in Prof. Dr. Guenther's book *Treasures of the Tibetan Middle Way*, two volumes, 3rd edition (with index), printed by Brill in Leiden, The Netherlands, an important publication which discusses the Collected Works of Tsong-kha-pa. Curious course of events: because the Chinese invaded Tibet, many Tibetans fled to India and elsewhere, and it is to them that we owe the translation of their sacred works.

It may be of interest to note that Part One of Guenther's book contains chapters on: Man, His Uniqueness and Obligation; Different Types of Man; The Divine in Man's Life; The Path and the Goal (this latter was reprinted in the special Spring issue of *The American Theosophist*); Pāramitāyāna and Mantrayāna. In Part Two (the Tibetan Sources): The Gold-Refinery, bringing out the very essence of the Sūtra and Tantra Paths; The Specific Guidance to the Profound Middle View, or the direct Message of Blo-bzang; The Secret Manual, Revealing the innermost Nature of Seeing Reality or the Source of all Attainments; The Instruction in the Essence of the Vajrayāna Path or the Short-cut to the Palace of Unity.

The Above-mentioned book is the second edition of *Tibetan Buddhism Without Mystification*. In his Preface Guenther writes: "The title of this book came to my mind during one of the many discussions I had with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whose guest I was for the university summer vacation in 1961. He complained that much of that which purported to be information about Buddhism in Tibet was pure fancy and catered for the mystery-monger rather than to the earnest seeker of religious experience or the critical student of philosophy, and that its rich symbolism, especially that of the Tantras, continued to be misrepresented grossly. He more or less pressed me to start writing about Buddhism as an inner experience which is of vital importance to our spiritual growth and development. In order to give an all-round picture of Buddhism as such a living power I chose four small texts that had been written by the tutor of the Eighth Dalai Lama. As the reader will find out, these texts are a mine of information . . . The texts which are translated here for the first time belong to the dGe-lugs-pa school of thought and in the notes . . . I have drawn copiously from other dGe-lugs-pa works."

Prof. Dubbink concluded with the thought that we must become conscious of what it is that makes us true MEN, and if we delve deep we come to the conclusion that it is life for others, the Bodhisattva ideal of Mahāyāna Buddhism. For essentially, Theosophy is esoteric Buddhism."

Letter of Protest to BRES

[We are informed by sources in Holland that the well known Dutch magazine *BRES* (published in Dutch and French) for April-May 1972 contains an article on the Stanzas of Dzyan, under the title *The Man in Black*. The author, Jacques Bergier, well known nuclear physicist, plans to write a series of articles on *Livres Maudits* (*Damned Books*), of which the above is the first. The original article appeared in French. Unfortunately, it contains numerous mistakes and, to say the least, is filled with misinformation. It opens with a so-called biography of H.P.B. written, not with regard to truth, but in an eye-catching sensational style.

[To this article we have received the following protest, directed to M. Jacques Bergier of Paris, France, by Jan H. Venema, for the School for the Study and Promulgation of the Esoteric Philosophy, The Hague, Holland.—Eds.]

Sir,

Up till now my colleagues, friends, and I have read the magazine *BRES*, calling itself "Chronicle of Civilization," with interest and appreciation. This especially because its Editors have tried to lay before its readers articles or studies stimulating a renewed thought-life in intellectual, spiritual and artistic domains. Articles also which often bore the stamp of honest investigation and sincere effort to furnish the readers with truthful information, in this way

Science'. And at this point I am reminded of something that G. de P. contributing in this turbulent world to the very necessary spreading of Light, Liberation and real Evolution.

Completely taken by surprise by your inexcusable scribbling in *BRES* 34, May 1972, (*Livres Maudits* and *Stanzas of Dzyan*) and failing to understand how a respectable magazine can allow such a misleading article to be published about the noble character of H. P. Blavatsky and the Stanzas of Dzyan, my colleagues, fellow-students and I wish to *protest vigorously* against this piece of shapeless, superficial and undignified journalism, which bears the stamp of complete lack of honest investigation and authority, sadly deviating from *BRES's* usual good sources of information. By your haphazard scribbling you have neither served the standing of *BRES*, nor its readers, nor yourself.

Whatever your motives may have been to make of yourself a copyist and slavish imitator by quoting at random fragments from all sorts of sources with untrue, half-true and false allegations, completely wrong representations of facts and events, and undeniably conflicting statements—all these motives I have to leave to yourself, your real Self. I would only request you to judge about yourself after a thorough study of the subjects about which you presume to be able to write, for which study my colleagues and I are prepared to give you an opportunity. However, I would ask you to consider carefully what you would think of a person who had been spreading untrue and therefore slanderous statements about a noble human being whom he had not known personally and which human being had her whole life devoted to the spiritual uplifting of mankind and *who cannot any longer defend herself*. Please bear in mind that great and reliable thinkers, philosophers and men of science have all testified to her spiritual greatness.

Avoiding for the present all argumentation, which would be useless since you have not sufficiently acquainted yourself with facts according to your own statement, I put the following questions before you:

a) If you have *yourself* read and studied the works mentioned in your article, i.e. *The Secret Doctrine* (in which the Stanzas are found and elucidated) and *Isis Unveiled*;

b) if you are acquainted with the other numerous and important works written by H. P. Blavatsky and with what they have meant to thousands of sincere human beings and still mean to ever widening groups of seekers after Truth and Wisdom, and whether you have tried (and how) to get an idea of the *real* life and work of this great woman;

c) if you are willing to reconsider and revise your superficial piece of journalism and send to the Editors of *BRES* your revisions after you have thoroughly acquainted yourself with the necessary literature. I understand from the Editors of *BRES* that they are willing to insert Comments from sources which can help you to redress your distorted statements, and I ask them to publish this letter in their next issue.

Yours faithfully,
for the School for the Study & Promulgation
of the Esoteric Philosophy,
J. H. VENEMA

My 'Theosophical History'—or What 'Kind' of a Theosophist I am—or, again, 'Eclectic'?

[The following almost *in extenso* is a letter from Miss Leona Sterba of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. If there is a 'moral' to it our readers can find it for themselves. At least they can ask themselves, What 'kind' of a Theosophist am I? And then perhaps cogitate on Theosophy—and Theosophists!—Eds.]

I had never even heard the word 'Theosophy' until I was through college (University of Oklahoma) and was in N.Y.C. studying Japanese at Columbia University.

One night, for no particular reason (unless karmic affinities) I walked down a street I had not been along before, and found myself in a meeting-hall where several hundred people were gathered. I first read some excerpts from open books in the window, then entered, was greeted cordially at the door and escorted to a seat. In a few moments a man—or maybe a woman, I don't remember—rose to speak in what seemed to me most strange words and phrases indeed, and not a word of which I could have repeated, either immediately afterward or to this day. But I glanced around me, and the people looked as sane as I still felt; and when the talk was followed by questions and answers, they too all sounded sane, though still very strange.

Well, I was drawn back week after week, until finally the Light began to dawn a little bit, though still not too glaringly. It turned out to be a U.L.T. Lodge. I shall be eternally grateful to the people there, and especially to a Mr. Kingsberg who with unfailing patience

tried to answer all my questions, even while I was in that utterly impossible stage of demanding that everything in the Theosophical teachings correspond point-by-point with 'the latest word of Modern said. I *could* 'document' it if necessary, but since it is not I shall try to put it in my own words: that the ones who come with open, honest skepticism are not the most hopeless; rather it is those who with pretended meekness and flattering words but perhaps with secret treachery in their hearts. "Heaven help them!" I think G. de P. ends up by saying.—But to get on with my 'history'.

After a few months of attending the meetings, a friend and I were given the ad. of 'another group' of Theosophists whose meetings we were told we might like to attend. So—we attended; but to this day I do not know to which 'Society' if any it belonged. It seemed to be a closed meeting, and they kept us waiting at the door briefly until a short consultation was held with 'someone' inside. The word of our pending arrival had seemingly failed to get through to the right person, who could have had us admitted without the slight wait. Again, we did not understand a word that was said—it seemed quite different from the U.L.T. meetings—so, if anyone there may have been a little suspicious that perhaps we would go away and tell secrets—well, they certainly needn't have worried! After the meeting a few of them came over to talk to us in a friendly manner, although not with the open cordiality of the U.L.T. And to my dying day I will not know which Society that group belonged to.

I attended the U.L.T. meetings for perhaps a year or more; then karmic ties of filial love and duties drew me back to a very small village (my home town) in northwestern Oklahoma, and for the next ten years I did not hear the word Theosophy mentioned again. And, fortunately—although I haven't always been blessed with too much common sense—I did have enough judgment not to bandy about the name of Theosophy among people who, wonderful as they are, were not ready to receive it.

I had brought back (from N.Y.) *Isis* and the *S.D.*; but they can hardly be read by being 'picked up' for twenty minutes now and then, and my duties were too constant to permit much more than that. I suppose, however, that all the time during those years, the ideas already implanted were germinating in my mind and getting ready for 'flowering and fruition' when karma would again permit.

There were a few breaks, of a few months, during those ten years. And in one of them I went to California to visit relatives and friends; and while I was visiting in Santa Ana I went one day to the Theosophical University Press in Altadena. Just how I heard of them I don't remember. It seems that I just looked in the Directory under 'Theosophy' and somehow picked them—perhaps because I wanted to buy the book I had heard of (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*) and figured that an organization with the word 'Press' in its name ought to have a book for sale. So I paid them a call, was most cordially received by the two people I met, and bought *The Mahatma Letters* and also *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*. That was my first introduction to G. de P. (author of the latter book). It was also the day I learned for the first time there were more than two 'kinds' of Theosophists (the U.L.T. and whatever it was my friend and I had visited that once in N.Y.). I remember saying in amazement to the two there at the U.P.: "Are there THREE groups?" I guess that if I had been told then that there are in fact twenty or more I would have been too shocked to believe it. For, like most people (I believe) who come into Theosophy without any previous knowledge of all the past history of the Movement, and all the quarrels, schisms, and whatnot, it seemed to me an amazing thing that Theosophists, who seemed to have the Truth—the beautiful shining Truth given to us by the Masters after so many centuries of secrecy and silence—should not all be thankfully and harmoniously united as ONE.

Three years ago this past April I saw an advertisement in the paper that "The Theosophical Society" was to hold a series of five public meetings at the Oklahoma Hotel here in Oklahoma City, where I was living then (and have lived since). I thought, "Well, I'll go and see what kind of Theosophists *they* are." They turned out to be the T.S. in A. I decided, "Well, a good Theosophist ought to be able to work with any group." And I joined. We had, to begin with, about twenty souls, and we were happily united in harmony for a while—so much so that they told us at Wheaton we were known among the Headquarters Staff as 'that nice group'. When that phrase was used no one even needed to ask where such a group lived. Everyone knew that the Oklahoma City Study Group was meant.

But now I have left the Study Group—as have all but four of the originals. Some of us do not wish to study so much about Astrology, Yoga, and the Angel Kingdom, et cetera. At least we do not want to study those things and call them Theosophy. So, with

no hard feelings—perhaps a few strong words which most of us regret, but with no real animosity—we have divided.

This new group which we hope to begin this summer—either June or July—will be composed of three 'kinds' of people, you might say: those who are now members-at-large of the T.S. in A.; some who are Associates of the U.L.T.; and some who are 'nothing' yet, Theosophically speaking. As to my own present status: I belong to both the first and second 'kinds'.

Our new group, while it will concentrate—or so we plan—on the teachings of H.P.B. and Mr. Judge (for I feel we cannot go far wrong with those two), plan to read, and 'offer' to all, other authors also, especially Dr. de Purucker. (I might add here, as it seems a good place, that I have presented to our Public Library the following books by G. de P.: *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, *Dialogues*, *Man in Evolution*, and *Studies in Occult Philosophy*. They are checked out a great deal of the time.) . . .

Library Contributions

The Librarian, Point Loma Publications, acknowledges with deep appreciation recent substantial gifts of books from: Mrs. Nihla Aldrich of North Hollywood, California; Miss Elizabeth W. Hatfield of Orleans, Massachusetts; Mrs. Katherine Macdonald (now Mrs. Iverson L. Harris), formerly of Costa Mesa, California, now of Pacific Beach, Calif.; Mr. Robert M. Howland, of Santa Ana, California, and Eldon Tucker, III, of Salt Lake City, Utah.

Grateful acknowledgement is also made to J. J. Laughlin of Walla Walla, Washington, of a bound set of his *Golden Keys* studies (based on H.P.B.'s *The Secret Doctrine*) which during recent years have appeared in *Corresponding Fellows Lodge of Theosophists Bulletin* (Worthing, England).

The Directors also take this opportunity to thank Dr. and Mrs. Emanuel Pekelis, of Camarillo, California, for their gift of a new "Liberator 500" mimeograph duplicator.

Next Issue, if space is available, the Editors hope to share with readers reviews of the following books received in recent months: *Basic Self-Knowledge* by Harry Benjamin (Based on the Gurdjieff System of Development); *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky (new abridged edition), edited by Joy Mills; *Impact of Theosophy and Science* (Modern Thought in the Light of Theosophy) by A. Kanan, edited by C. R. Sankaran; *Flying Saucer Viewpoint* by Rex Dutta, and *The Affecting Presence* by Robert Armstrong.

New Publication

The Wisdom of Lao-tse by Iverson L. Harris has just been issued by Point Loma Publications, Inc. This is an address given at the 26th anniversary of the Cosmopolitan Group of Students of Theosophy in Mexico City, February 15, 1955. The price of the booklet is 60c. (Less 40% to Dealers).

Point Loma Publications:

Golden Precepts: A Guide to Enlightened Living, by G. de Purucker
Hardcase, 192 pp. \$5.00; Paperback, \$3.00

Wind of the Spirit, by G. de Purucker
Paperback, 282 pp. \$3.25.

Mme. Blavatsky Defended, by Iverson L. Harris
Paperback, 174 pp. \$3.00.

Theosophy Under Fire, by Iverson L. Harris
Paperback, 88 pp. \$3.00.

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms: and a Key to Their Correct Pronunciation, by Geoffrey A. Barborka
Paperback, 76 pp. \$1.00

The Wisdom of Lao-tse, by Iverson L. Harris
Paperback, 36 pp. \$.60